



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Patent and Trademark Office

**NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND ISSUE FEE DUE**

LM01/0229

HILL & SIMPSON  
85TH FLOOR SEARS TOWER  
CHICAGO IL 60606

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	TOTAL CLAIMS	EXAMINER AND GROUP ART UNIT	DATE MAILED
09/028,718	02/24/98	022	YOUNG, J 2764	02/29/00
First Named Applicant	CAIRNS, 35 USC 154(b) term ext. = 0 Days.			

TITLE OF INVENTION  
METHOD FOR PRODUCT PROMOTION

ATTY'S DOCKET NO.	CLASS-SUBCLASS	BATCH NO.	APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	FEE DUE	DATE DUE
2 P97.2784	705-014.000	I91	UTILITY	YES	\$605.00	05/30/00

**THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED.**

**THE ISSUE FEE MUST BE PAID WITHIN THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED.**

**HOW TO RESPOND TO THIS NOTICE:**

**I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.**

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

- A. If the status is changed, pay twice the amount of the FEE DUE shown above and notify the Patent and Trademark Office of the change in status, or
- B. If the status is the same, pay the FEE DUE shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

- A. Pay FEE DUE shown above, or
- B. File verified statement of Small Entity Status before, or with, payment of 1/2 the FEE DUE shown above.

**II. Part B-Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and returned to the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) with your ISSUE FEE. Even if the ISSUE FEE has already been paid by charge to deposit account, Part B Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and returned. If you are charging the ISSUE FEE to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B-Issue Fee Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted.**

**III. All communications regarding this application must give application number and batch number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Box ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.**

**IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.**

PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE COPY

# Notice of Allowability

Application No.  
09/028,718

Applicant(s)

Cairns

Examiner

John L. Young

Group Art Unit  
2764



All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course.

☒ This communication is responsive to Amendment B filed 2/25/2000

☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-22

☐ The drawings filed on \_\_\_\_\_ are acceptable.

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

☐ All ☐ Some\* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been  
☐ received.

☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE to comply with the requirements noted below is set to EXPIRE **THREE MONTHS** FROM THE "DATE MAILED" of this Office action. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

☐ Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL APPLICATION, PTO-152, which discloses that the oath or declaration is deficient. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION IS REQUIRED.

☒ Applicant MUST submit NEW FORMAL DRAWINGS

☐ because the originally filed drawings were declared by applicant to be informal.

☒ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948, attached hereto or to Paper No. 4

☐ including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_, which has been approved by the examiner.

☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment/Comment.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the reverse side of the drawings. The drawings should be filed as a separate paper with a transmittal letter addressed to the Official Draftsperson.

☐ Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Any response to this letter should include, in the upper right hand corner, the APPLICATION NUMBER (SERIES CODE/SERIAL NUMBER). If applicant has received a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due, the ISSUE BATCH NUMBER and DATE of the NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE should also be included.

## Attachment(s)

☒ Notice of References Cited, PTO-892

☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). 5

☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948

☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413

☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment

☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material

☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

Serial Number: 09/028,718 (Cairns)

Art Unit: 2764

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2/28/00  
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## NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY

### DRAWINGS

1. This application has been filed with informal drawings which are acceptable for examination purposes only. "The applicant is required to submit acceptable drawings within three months from the mailing of the 'Notice of Allowability.'" (See 37 CFR 1.85(c)).

### CLAIM REJECTIONS — 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

2. Rejections of claims 1-20 withdrawn.

### CLAIMS ALLOWABLE OVER THE PRIOR ART

3. Claims 1-20 as amended are allowable.
4. Claims 21 & 22 added by Amendment A as amended are allowable.

### EXAMINER'S FORMAL AMENDMENT — CLAIMS

5. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview on 2/28/2000 by Melvin A. Robinson (attorney for applicant).

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This application was initially filed with claims 1-20. Amendment A (filed 12/08/99 as paper # 6) amended claims 1-3, 8-14 and 16-18. Amendment A added claims 21 and 22.

Amendment B proposed changes to claims 1, 21 & 22. Claims 1, 21 & 22 are herein amended by examiner's amendment.

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1. (Twice Amended) A process for product promotion, comprising the steps of:
- providing a product or service;
  - providing sweepstakes information with said product or service, said sweepstakes information directing a purchaser or potential purchaser to a network address and including a unique code, said sweepstakes information being provided by at least one of modification of packaging of said product or service or modification of said product or service or incorporation of a card or piece into said packaging;
  - providing a site at said network address;
  - receiving an inquiry by said purchaser or potential purchaser at said network address;
  - receiving said unique code from said purchaser or potential purchaser;
  - obtaining purchaser or potential purchaser information from said purchaser or potential purchaser; and
  - informing said purchaser or potential purchaser whether said purchaser or potential purchaser has won a prize based on said unique code while said purchaser or potential purchaser is connected at said site.
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21. (Amended) A method for product promotion, comprising the steps of:

providing a rebate promotion with a plurality of products or services offered for sale;

providing a unique code with each of said plurality of products or services, said step of providing said unique code including at least one of modification of said products or services, modification of packaging of said products or services, or incorporating a card or piece into packaging of said product or service;

providing information directing purchasers of said products or services to an electronic address;

accepting input of said unique codes from said purchasers;

verifying valid codes of purchasers accessing said electronic address while said purchasers are connected to said electronic address;

providing rebates to purchasers who input valid codes at said electronic address.

22. (Amended) A method for product promotion, comprising the steps of:

providing a product or service for sale;

providing a unique code accompanying said product or service for sale by modification of said product or service, modification of packaging of said product or service, or incorporation of a card or piece into said product or service;

providing an electronic address for verifying said unique codes; and

providing at least one of rebate, discount and sweepstakes promotion to purchasers of said

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product or service who input a verified unique code at said electronic address  
including informing said purchasers of a status of said at least one of said rebate,  
discount and sweepstakes promotion while each of said purchasers are connected at said  
electronic address.

### REASONS FOR ALLOWABILITY

6. Independent claims 1-22 as amended are allowable; the following is the examiner's statement of reasons for allowability.

The applicant sufficiently shows that limitations of the instant application have multiple implementation details not disclosed in the prior art of record.

Independent claims 1, 18, 21 & 22 substantially recite a method of promoting a product or service where the targeted customer uses an Internet address obtained from an information insert in a product package and interacts with the provider's fulfillment center on-line via said Internet address in order to determine instantaneously on-line what prizes or rebates the customer has been awarded. For example, claim 18 recites: "cards . . . marked with an Internet address and respective codes . . . providing a site at said Internet address for access by said purchasers; receiving inquiries from said purchasers at said site . . . informing each of said purchasers of status based on said unique codes while each of said purchasers are connected at said site." Even though on-line Internet based promotion sweepstakes were well known in the art at the time of the invention; even though product information inserts were well known in the art at the time of the invention, and even though it was well known in the art at the time of

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the invention to provide Internet and e-mail addresses on business cards and insert them into customer packages, the base reference used in the examiner's prior office action rejections teaches away from using a product insert card as an explicit precursor for interactive on-line sales promotions sweepstakes notification. The prior art references of record do not precisely teach or suggest customers obtaining an Internet address from a product insert for the purpose of playing a promotion sweepstakes and obtaining instantaneous notification of the winning status of the sweepstakes promotion on-line at said Internet address. Therefore, the instant invention is not anticipated by the prior art of record. Furthermore, the prior art references of record do not implicitly, individually or in combination disclose elements that would render the claimed limitations in the instant invention obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

Dependent claims 2-17, 19 & 20 are allowable because they depend from base claims which contain allowable subject matter.

#### RELEVANT PRIOR ART

7. The reference made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

5,729,693, U.S. Pat. [Mar 17, 1998]

Holda-Fleck,

705/14

"SYSTEMS AND METHOD TO AUTOMATICALLY PROVIDE AN  
ELECTRONIC CONSUMER REBATE."

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### CONCLUSION

8. Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Any response to this action may be sent via facsimile to either:

(703) 308-9051 (for formal communications marked EXPEDITED

PROCEDURE), or

(703) 308-5397 (for informal communications marked PROPOSED or DRAFT).

Hand delivered responses may be brought to:

Sixth floor Receptionist  
Crystal Park II  
2121 Crystal Drive  
Arlington, Virginia.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John L. Young who may be reached via telephone at (703) 305-3801. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Friday between 8:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell, may be reached at (703) 305-9768.



Serial Number: 09/028,718

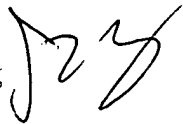
(Cairns)

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

John L. Young



Patent Examiner

February 28, 2000



James P. Trammell  
Supervisory Patent Examiner  
Technology Center 2700

09/028718

NOTICE OF DRAFTSPERSON'S  
PATENT DRAWING REVIEWThe drawing(s) filed (insert date) 6/2/00 are:

- ☒ approved by the Draftsperson under 37 CFR 1.84 or 1.152.  
☐ objected to by the Draftsperson under 37 CFR 1.84 or 1.152 for the reasons indicated below. The Examiner will require submission of new, corrected drawings when necessary. Corrected drawing must be submitted according to the instructions on the back of this notice.

1. DRAWINGS. 37 CFR 1.84(a): Acceptable categories of drawings:  
Black ink. Color: \_\_\_\_\_  
Color drawings are not acceptable until petition is granted.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Pencil and non black ink not permitted. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
2. PHOTOGRAPHS. 37 CFR 1.84(b)  
Pencil and non black ink not permitted. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
1 full-tone set is required. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Photographs not properly mounted (must use bristol board or photographic double-weight paper). Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Poor quality (half-tone). Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
3. TYPE OF PAPER. 37 CFR 1.84(e)  
Paper not flexible, strong, white, and durable.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Erasures, alterations, overwritings, interlineations, folds, copy machine marks not accepted. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Mylar, velum paper is not acceptable (too thin). Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
4. SIZE OF PAPER. 37 CFR 1.84(f): Acceptable sizes:  
21.0 cm by 29.7 cm (DIN size A4)  
21.6 cm by 27.9 cm (8 1/2 x 11 inches)  
All drawing sheets not the same size.  
Sheet(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Drawings sheets not an acceptable size. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
5. MARGINS. 37 CFR 1.84(g): Acceptable margins:  
Top 2.5 cm Left 2.5 cm Right 1.5 cm Bottom 1.0 cm  
SIZE: A4 Size  
Top 2.5 cm Left 2.5 cm Right 1.5 cm Bottom 1.0 cm  
SIZE: 8 1/2 x 11  
Margins not acceptable. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Top (T) \_\_\_\_\_ Left (L) \_\_\_\_\_  
Right (R) \_\_\_\_\_ Bottom (B) \_\_\_\_\_
6. VIEWS. 37 CFR 1.84(h)  
REMINDER: Specification may require revision to correspond to drawing changes.  
Partial views. 37 CFR 1.84(h)(2)  
Brackets needed to show figure as one entity.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Views not labeled separately or properly.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Enlarged view not labeled separately or properly.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
7. SECTIONAL VIEWS. 37 CFR 1.84(h)(3)  
Hatching not indicated for sectional portions of an object.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Sectional designation should be noted with Arabic or Roman numbers. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
8. ARRANGEMENT OF VIEWS. 37 CFR 1.84(i)  
Words do not appear on a horizontal, left-to-right fashion when page is either upright or turned so that the top becomes the right side, except for graphs. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
9. SCALE. 37 CFR 1.84(k)  
Scale not large enough to show mechanism without crowding when drawing is reduced in size to two-thirds in reproduction.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
10. CHARACTER OF LINES, NUMBERS, & LETTERS. 37 CFR 1.84(l)  
Lines, numbers & letters not uniformly thick and well defined, clean, durable, and black (poor line quality). Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
11. SHADING. 37 CFR 1.84(m)  
Solid black areas pale. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Solid black shading not permitted. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Shade lines, pale, rough and blurred. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
12. NUMBERS, LETTERS, & REFERENCE CHARACTERS. 37 CFR 1.84(p)  
Numbers and reference characters not plain and legible.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Figure legends are poor. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Numbers and reference characters not oriented in the same direction as the view. 37 CFR 1.84(p)(1):  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
English alphabet not used. 37 CFR 1.84(p)(2)  
Figs \_\_\_\_\_  
Numbers, letters and reference characters must be at least .32 cm (1/8 inch) in height. 37 CFR 1.84(p)(3)  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
13. LEAD LINES. 37 CFR 1.84(q)  
Lead lines cross each other. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Lead lines missing. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
14. NUMBERING OF SHEETS OF DRAWINGS. 37 CFR 1.84(t)  
Sheets not numbered consecutively, and in Arabic numerals beginning with number 1. Sheet(s) \_\_\_\_\_
15. NUMBERING OF VIEWS. 37 CFR 1.84(u)  
Views not numbered consecutively, and in Arabic numerals, beginning with number 1. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_
16. CORRECTIONS. 37 CFR 1.84(w)  
Corrections not made from prior PTO-948 dated \_\_\_\_\_
17. DESIGN DRAWINGS. 37 CFR 1.152  
Surface shading shown not appropriate. Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Solid black shading not used for color contrast.  
Fig(s) \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS

REVIEWER

DATE

6/30/00

TELEPHONE NO.